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**On September 12, 2001, Representative Michael Bilirakis
gave the following statement on the House floor
in response to the attack on America**

"Margaret Thatcher once said that the United States was unique because it was the only country whose very existence was based on an idea -- the idea of freedom. Whether on a battlefield or in a factory, at home or abroad, in peace or confrontation, it is the American heart, an unbridled and unyielding spirit, that has pulled us through over 200 years of freedom.

On September 11, 2001, America's calm was shattered by a horrendous act of terrorism. There is no doubt that this day will long be remembered, and our thoughts and prayers are with those whose lives have been forever altered by this tragedy.

America responded to this tragedy the way we have responded to past ones -- by coming together and reaching out to one another. Yesterday, Americans rushed to the aid of their fellow Americans without thought of the possible consequences to themselves.

Even as we pull together to recover from this tragedy, one thing is perfectly clear --- **America has never, nor will it now, yield to terrorism.** Make no mistake -- we will find and bring to justice the despicable individuals who, in any manner, helped carry out these heinous crimes. They have made a fatal miscalculation and should expect swift and severe retaliation by the United States of America.

Those who perpetrated this heinous act have awakened a sleeping giant, and they should know that their acts of cowardice will never break our spirit or lessen our love for freedom and democracy. Their evil has united us and will make us stronger and more resolved to fight for the ideals upon which this great nation was founded. The attack on America may change our view of the world, but it will not change our American spirit.

God bless America."